2: Durham B-5 (ca. 1910)1928 EG1 Albania EG1

days of the oncoming of the Turk. Lek fought on the side of Venice, and when Scutari fell in 1472 he and many refugees fled to Italy along with the Venetians. But when Sultan Mahommed II died in 1481 and his sons fought for the throne, Turkish rule in Europe was in a critical state. The Serbs, however, helped to re-establish it by fighting on behalf of one of the claimants. During the confusion Lek Dukagin returned to his homelands, as did also Ivan Tzrnojevitch, the founder of Montenegro. Ivan became a vassal of the Turks, and is known to this day in Montenegro by his Turkish title, Ivan Beg. Lek Dukagin is not recorded to have done so. That he ruled as he pleased in the mountains is shown by his great fame there. It is said that in 1464 Pope Paul II had excommunicated him for his most un-Christian code.

Of the descendants of the Dukagini two are recorded as turning Moslem. Some settled in Venice—a "Luca Ducagini Duca di Pulato e dell stato Ducagini" is recorded in Venice in 1506. The Bib Doda family, who, until the Great War, were the hereditary chiefs of Mirdita, claimed descent from the Dukagini, but could give no definite pedigree. The tribe Bijelopavlitch in Montenegro traces descent from Paul i Bardh (Paul the White), brother or nephew of Lek.

Though Lek enforced the Canon, it so much resembles tribe law of other lands that we cannot believe he originated it in the fifteenth century. What he evidently strove to do was to check crime by inflicting certain punishments. That—as the tribesmen always declared—he both ordered the taking of blood and fixed a punishment for so doing, is incredible. He probably modified and added to existing law and strictly enforced it.

This is the Canon so far as I know it. Dom Kol Ashti, the very worthy priest of Shkreli, gave me many facts. Others I learnt from Mgr. Miédia, now Archbishop of Scutari. Much I picked up in my travels, and by comparing all have compiled the following account. In Maltsia e Madhe the Canon was much modified. Among the Dukagini it was in more primitive form. The Turkish Government had somewhat modified it; but everywhere it emphasized the tribe. The tribe has jurisdiction only within its lands.

MURDER WITHIN THE TRIBE

Murder may be the result of a quarrel or it may be a blood-feud, the cause of which is more or less remote. In either case the man who has taken blood flies at once to a safe place outside the tribe. Any house is bound to give him hospitality. In the case of a feud, he is regarded as a most unfortunate man who has but done his duty. He at once proclaims his deed. The headmen of his tribe then meet and

2: Durham B-5 (ca. 1910)1928 EG1 Albania EG1

583 work to do again. No one thought it unreasonable, and the wedding was postponed till she had finished. I created great horror by saying it would be better to find another man to fit the already made garments.

All the gifts exchanged are keenly scrutinized, and the respective families argue as to whether they have been properly treated.

582 *Forbidden Degrees.*—Among the Catholics, of course, the usual laws have to be observed. But the people maintain far more rigid ones of their own. As we have shown in the chapter on tribes, no couple tracing origin from the same male ancestor, no matter how remote, is marriageable in North Albania, whether they be Christian or Moslem. Neither are those related by "hair-cutting" or by "sworn brotherhood" marriageable.

Priests cannot refuse to marry such if there be no other impediment, but I was assured it was very rarely they were asked to do so. Though I made many inquiries, I heard of but one case of a priest being asked to marry a couple with a remote common ancestor. Being an Albanian 684 tribesman, he thought it very repulsive, but as the pair had cohabited, he 183 consented; nor by Church law could he have refused. The bridegroom was shot soon afterwards by the outraged relatives.

3. The Levirate

587 On one point the tribesman came into severe collision with the 688 Church. He considered it his bounden duty to marry the widow, not only of his brother, but of any male of the house, except his father. In Maltsia e Madhe this custom had died out, and blood-feud arose [628] between Hoti and Kastrati because a case had occurred, and the Hoti considered their honour blackened. But among the Catholic Dukagini the custom, in spite of most strenuous efforts of the Church, was still common. Among the Moslem tribes and among the Moslems of Scutari I was assured it was almost universal.

[577] From the tribesman's point of view the position was this: A widow left with young children must remain in the family house and rear them. If they are daughters, she can be returned to her own people when they are old enough not to need her. If there is a son, she has the right to live in the house permanently, but she cannot marry outside the house, as no strange man can be brought into it. It would be cruel to condemn a young woman to celibacy; it would not be honourable. Therefore, even though her brothers-in-law were already married by the rites of the Church, one or other of them must take her as wife. The priest in vain called it concubinage. The man said she was his legal wife and his legal wife agreed with the arrangement.

Birth, Marriage, and Death

Sometimes the brother-in-law was unmarried, but this did not help matters, such marriages being prohibited by the Church. To stop the practice it was usual to excommunicate not only the couple but the whole "house" which permitted it, until the "levirate wife" was dismissed. I visited, at Apripa Gurit, a house of eighteen people thus under the ban. The son, a fine young fellow, had taken his elder brother's young widow to wife one month after her husband's death: this by tribe rule is the correct time. She had been married a very short time to her first husband and had not yet borne a child. The whole household was very uneasy about the excommunication, and offered the priest in my presence first thirty and then fifty guldens and pictures and candles for the church. But they stubbornly refused to put a stop to the "levirate marriage"; it would not be honourable. The young man himself was very certain of this. It was a duty he owed to his brother, and, no matter what the consequences, he would do it. He said they had found a girl, and arranged that he should marry her in a year's time. Till then he must cohabit with his sister-in-law. This he assured me very earnestly.

587 688

At Thethi Shala I found a case of a man who had thus taken his uncle's widow and his brother's widow. He then proposed taking a legitimate wife as well and had paid most of the purchase money. Only then did the bride's parents learn of the two other "wives." They said he should not have their daughter till the other two were dismissed. He replied she was paid for, and was his property and threatened vengeance.

587 578 684

The parents appealed to the padre, who sheltered them and the girl at the church-house, and succeeded in arranging a marriage for her with a man at a safe distance. The parents returned the first purchase money. "The aunt and sister-in-law" arrangement continued. The padre at Thethi had routed out all polygamous arrangements in his parish but two.

595

He said that the people had a deep-rooted belief that it was right thus to take as wife the widow of uncle, cousin, or brother if she continued to live in the communal house. If this was not permitted she must be sent home to her people. They could see no alternative, and pleaded: "It is our old custom. Do not interfere with it."

587 577

In the wild and distant tribes of Nikaj, Toplana, and Berisha the custom was extremely common among the Christians. Thus at Nikaj, out of three hundred houses about fifty had sister-in-law concubinage, and other houses similarly kept aunts, so a large proportion of the children were illegitimate in the eyes of the Church, but not of the people. The legitimate wives were very apt to bolt with another man, and there was much blood-feud. In Berisha I was told that the sister-in-

587

2: Durham B-5 (ca. 1910)1928 EG1 Albania EG1

587 law was taken to wife more often than not. To remonstrances the reply was, "She belongs to us," and it was pointed out it was the only way to get a wife without paying for her.

[587] In these districts, if the widow is sold, the bride-price is shared by her husband's family and her father's.

595 A man at Nikaj came to see me who was excommunicate for having
577 two wives—a legitimate wife and the widow of his cousin. He told me
688 he could not possibly put her away because it would be a disgrace to do so. She must stay in the house because she had young children to bring up, and so long as she is in the house he must cohabit with her, for she cannot have another husband. He was unhappy about the excommunication—but one must do one's duty and take the risk.

587 It is perhaps noteworthy that in the districts where this custom
144 is firmly rooted there are no Slavonic place-names and no appearance
103 of any Slavonic blood. The people are all in stature shorter and smaller built than the Maltsia e Madhe people. They are almost all dark-eyed—dark-brown to hazel—and dark-haired. The skull is short, but is round at the back and has not the characteristic flat back of the folk farther north. The hair grows very low on the forehead, especially on the temples, where sometimes it almost unites by a thin line of hair with the outer end of the eyebrow. The eyebrows often nearly meet in the middle. The nose is short and straight. The moustache is sparse and straggly. The beard, such as is seen after a fortnight without shaving, often sparse or patchy.

587 The custom of the levirate may therefore belong to the small,
179 dark, pre-Slavonic people.

The purpose of the levirate in other lands is often said to be to raise up children who are to rank as those of the deceased. Though this may have been the reason in the above-mentioned case of the man who took the very recently married widow of his brother, in the great majority of cases in Albania it is not so; for the widow with sons is the one who has the right to remain, and in fact must remain, in the family house; and therefore it is she who is most frequently the levirate wife. In this matter Albanian custom seems to differ from that in other lands where the levirate is practised.

4. Rights of Husband over Wife

562 No one may beat a woman but her father or her husband. In the mountains a husband had the right to beat his wife if he told her three
593 times to do, or not to do, a thing, and she disobeyed each time. If he
681 orders her not to reply and she does so he may beat her. Even some

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

846 is spread, the national head-dress, ornamented with
[301] sequins, is placed on her head, and all her necklaces are hung round her neck, to receive the friends and acquaintances who now flock in to offer their congratulations. In some parts of Albania, and especially
[431] among the Moslems, it is customary to bring hand-
[688] some presents to the infant. As each visitor did her best to outshine her neighbour in the value of her gift, this usage, among the Roman Catholic Miridites, became so ruinously expensive, that the ban of the Church was finally laid upon it. The visitors to the mother and baby consequently now bring with them only an egg, with which they rub the face of the new arrival, with the wish, "*Pashi bar*" (May it be always white!)—*i.e.*, never have cause to blush for its actions.

852 When the baby is three days old the Fates are be-
[776] lieved to arrive and decide what its fortune is to be. When two of the Weird Sisters have had their say, the third speaks, and her decision is final.[1] On the evening of this day, which is called the child's *Poganik*,[2] all the relatives of the family assemble uninvited, each bringing a small loaf, a girdle cake, and a wooden flask of wine. On these they feast and drink healths to the mother and child, the formula addressed to the latter being, "May he have strong legs!"
[777] The women then set to work to make a large cake, all present touching, "for luck," the sieve used to sift the flour. As the dough is being kneaded coins are put into it, and when baked it is broken in pieces

[1] See "The Story of the Child," p. 319.
[2] The meaning of this term appears to have been lost by the Albanians.

4: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
EG1 Albania EG1

bours. One of their chief offences, in the eyes of the strictly orthodox, is the scant attention paid by the wives of these sectarians to the law of *namekhram*, or wearing the veil, it being their practice to appear unveiled before their husband's friends when he gives them permission to do so.

Cloistered life is not more popular with the women of Albania than with those of the rest of Turkey. In Islam there is, of course, no such resource for disappointed maidens, and marriage being as much the rule among Christians, whether orthodox Greek or Roman Catholic, as among Moslems, nunneries are not numerous, and their inmates are but few. Those which exist, however, offer a welcome asylum to the small section of women whom circumstances have doomed to a life of celibacy, and who the more willingly enter them as they, by so doing, acquire a degree of liberty which could never be theirs while living as unmarried women in the house of their father or brother. For in the East, as I have before remarked, convent rule is remarkably lax, and, beyond attending the prescribed church services, no very strict account is required of the way in which the good sisters spend their time. If report speaks true, they do not always refrain from making use of the opportunities for flirtation afforded them by their emancipation from conventional restraint.

10: Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

power by modern governments. The value of the difference to the servant was that the more important his master, the better he himself was protected.

It is the rule in all denominations that priests may not carry arms. This is no drawback to anybody under a modern administration, but in Turkish times it meant that a priest's servant was more exposed to danger than an armed layman's. The Catholic church tried to make up for the deficiency by special legislation of which Father Gjeçov gives a full account. Thus, though a priest's servant had a certain freedom to attend to his own business, any message he carried to a house was treated as coming from the priest. Whoever molested him molested the priest, and might be fined according to the gravity of the offence but not less than ten lambs, which went, not to the servant, but to the church and tribe. Whoever killed the servant started a feud with his family only, if the servant were local, but with the whole parish if he were a stranger—here can be recognized the principle of the community's guest—and if the murderer was local, the parish burned his house and took a hundred lambs and an ox from him as fine. If labourers hired by the church were molested, the offender had to pay a fine, divisible between them and the church; the more numerous they were, the heavier the fine; on an average this amounted to ten lambs. If an offender refused to pay, the parish went in a body and took what it wanted from his sheepfold. In short, the church treated any wrong to a defenceless priest's servant as a major crime.

The retainers of great men were essentially a bodyguard, and were only maintained by men with blood feuds. Some lived at home and joined their patron for some special, and usually brief, occasion; others lived for long periods with him, constantly ready for whatever service he might ask. They occasionally received a gold piece as reward; more often they were paid in kind—by being lent money without interest for a funeral or a wedding feast, by being given grain in bad years, by having a useful word said in the ear of the authorities to extract them from some difficulty. While his own children were small, the Hereditary Captain of Mirditë had eight young relatives living permanently with him, brief holidays at home excepted. They waited at meals or carried messages to the servants with the lofty air of medieval pages of noble blood. Until exiled during the war of 1939–45, Shevqet Vërlaci, the formidable Bey of Elbasan, was guarded night and day by relays of peasants

In certain cases the bajraktar and the local headman could act alone. For example, in case of sacrilege against the church they had power to pronounce even a death sentence. In practice, however, they preferred to consult the tribe and the ecclesiastical authorities. After the Young Turks introduced their constitution in 1908 they tried to make everything in Albania very legal and proper. If land was bought, for example, they required a deed of conveyance where the word of witnesses had formerly sufficed. The best lawyer in the land might write out the document and great men witness it, but it had no legal validity until the bajraktar and local headmen had affixed their seals.

As a legal figure the bajraktar had special weight. If called to serve on a jury of twenty-four men, his single person was counted equal to the twelve jurors left unnamed by the elders. A peace made in his presence was particularly binding. If at all distinguished he was often called in by another tribe to settle a dispute that had baffled its own elders. In his own tribe, besides acting as judge in many ordinary cases, he was ultimate referee in all difficult cases. Boundary disputes, the most fertile source of trouble among these land-starved tribes, were often referred straight to him for settlement. Disobedience to his ruling might entail the worst penalties. Particularly in the Malësi e Madhe, he and the local headman had power to appoint elders to settle a quarrel. If these failed to do so, or were found to have based their decision on a false oath by one of the litigants, it fell to the bajraktar and the local headman to reopen the case and to pronounce a final judgement. If a headman judged a case and gave a verdict the bajraktar disliked, he could upset this verdict and substitute one of his own. But neither headman nor elders could upset his judgements; these were always final and unalterable.

All the above applies to the non-tribal areas of central Albania as much as to the northern tribes. Mus Ballgjini of Çermenikë, for instance, was almost more famous as a law-giver than as a military leader. By a seeming exception the bajraktar of the Perlat tribe of Kthellë did not judge but left such matters to the elders. The explanation of the anomaly probably lies in his notorious incompetence. It was every bajraktar's province to judge in peace as well as to lead in war.

In all areas the jurisdiction of the bajraktar was subject to certain limitations. If the commoners did not like one of his decisions,

10: Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

while he had gone to the ambush by another's instructions he had walked there on his own legs. As the instigator of the crime had broken his promise about paying the blood money, they sentenced him to have his house burned down by the tribe.

On one occasion Lek Dukagjini had come at Skanderbeg's invitation to discuss some blood feuds at a General Assembly of all the tribes in the land. Skanderbeg opposed the principle of 'a life for a life' on the grounds that all men were *not* equal; the blood of a physically fine man was different from that of a poor type. At Lek's suggestion, however, he inquired of his mother, upon oath, what sort of a man his father had been. On learning that he had been a poor type, Skanderbeg at the next Assembly agreed to the principle of equality!

About 1870, when Kolë Prenga the Great was Captain of Mirditë, a jar of butter was stolen from the church house in Orosh during the priest's absence. On his return his servant, who had also been away at the time, informed him of the theft. The priest, a Franciscan, informed the bajraktar of Orosh. The latter convened the tribe (*bajrak*) but no one confessed to the theft. The bajraktar then informed Captain Kola. The captain undertook to track down the culprit, and one day ordered the tribe to assemble on the open space in front of the church at Orosh. In spite of Captain Kola's questions no one came forward to confess to the crime. Then Captain Kola, together with the chiefs of the tribe, sentenced the unknown thief to death and banishment from the tribe; his house, too, was to be destroyed and his land left uncultivated. Not long afterwards the thieves were discovered. They were two young men of Orosh, Prengë Kolë Marku and another whose name has been forgotten. Captain Kolë Prenga the Great again ordered the tribe to assemble, one man from every house, at the church at Orosh. The two young men also came by order to the meeting. Captain Kola read out the sentence that had previously been pronounced. The two thieves were stood in the middle of an open space, unarmed and with their hands folded at the waist. The tribe stood up awaiting the captain's order to fire. But the priest, filled with pity for the culprits, begged the captain, the chiefs and the commoners to grant them their lives. This was done, they paid money to the church for their sacrilege, returned twice the quantity of what they had stolen, paid the usual fine and were expelled from the tribe.

10:Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

[688] It was not the theft but the sacrilege that on this occasion called
[691] the tribe of Orosh to a General Assembly and made them pronounce even the death sentence; without the sacrilege the fine would have been penalty enough. Murder of a priest, again heinous sacrilege, raised the same issues, but without hope of any reprieve from death save what secret flight might provide. Murder of a guest or of a man with whom the murderer had previously sworn an oath of peace, that is to say, of persons who had a right to protection, also came before a General Assembly and was punished by the severest penalties, including death. Yet theft in the ordinary way was [694] handled by elders and punished by a fine, and murder of the ordinary type was left to the victim's family and punished by blood vengeance. These were crimes against the individual and matter for individual handling. Sacrilege, however, and the murder of protected persons, were crimes against society, the former threatening the authority of the Church and the latter the tribal fabric.

689 When a man's general behaviour was a public menace or nuisance,
623 he usually found himself before a General Assembly. To begin with, the elders of his social unit took the matter up as was their duty, attempting first to reason him into a better frame of mind. If this failed, they had to call a plenary meeting of the village to try the culprit and to carry out whatever sentence was pronounced. This was usually burning down his house and leaving his land untilled for a specific number of years. If he still persisted in his evil-doing, and this was serious socially speaking, the elders could call the whole tribe to their assistance. For public pests incited public extermination, and this required the sanction and the whole force of the tribe. Miss Durham relates what she calls 'an amazing case of wholesale justice' which occurred in the Mirditë tribe, Fan, in February 1912. A certain family in this tribe had become notorious for evil-doing, robbing, shooting and general misconduct. A 'gathering of the whole tribe' condemned all the males of the family to death. Men were appointed to lie in wait for them on a certain day and pick them off. And on that day the whole seventeen of them were shot. One was only five and another only twelve years old. It was even proposed to kill an unfortunate woman who was pregnant in case she should bear a male and so renew the evil.[1]

[1] Durham, op. cit. p. 75.

10: Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

(Godolesh and Lumë). The first two phrases are evidently old Albanian and have nothing exclusively Moslem about them; the second (lit. 'May I see God') has even a Catholic ring. The third is widely known all over the Moslem world and in certain areas which were once under Moslem rule. But it is used in a magical rather than a religious sense. It is found in magical formulae among the Arabs of Egypt and the Christian Greeks of the island of Zea, next door neighbour to Euboea.[1]

The only invocation of the Deity which the author recorded among the Orthodox was in Shpat and ran as follows: 'By that Christ in Whom we believe.' It is evidently a Church formula.

There was no sign that any of these oaths was preferred to the others; they seemed to have equal value. Readers who know the Catholics and the Orthodox, the two religions which divided Albania before the Turks came in the fifteenth century, will be struck by the paucity of references to Christ and the Virgin Mary and by the emphasis on God; this may be a further indication that the oaths go back to pagan days when neither Christ nor the Virgin was known.

Formulae for invoking Catholic saints were such as 'By that St Nicolas' in Kurbin and 'By the candle of St Nicolas' among the Highlanders of Breg i Matit and Gurrëzë. Both were very grave oaths. The candle in the second is the wax taper lit before pictures of the saint by the devout; oath-takers seem to have feared that perjury would extinguish the flame of their life as easily as a candle could be put out. Of all their saints too, the Catholic Highlanders preferred St Nicolas. No Moslem saints were invoked as such; it was rather by their graves than themselves that oaths were taken. A strange oath, which comes from Surroj, was an exception. This ran 'By this patron saint of coffee'. Coffee, the peasants of Surroj explained, has a 'very important' patron saint. All over Albania coffee-house keepers make a libation to him every morning by pouring away the first cup of coffee that they make. They hope that after being placated in this way the saint will send them many customers. Some believe that he lies buried somewhere in the east of the Turkish empire, possibly in Arabia.

Catholic priests and Moslem clergymen—hoxhas and sheikhs among the Sunnis, abbots (*baba*, sing.; *baballar*, plur.) among the Bektashis—were respected as men of God, and Bektashi abbots

[1] See *Folklore*, Vol. XXXVII, p. 195 (June 1926).

10:Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

695 even became saints at their death, but an oath 'by the priest' or
688 'by that hoxha' was never taken; it would have been regarded as
793 sacrilege.

695 A most interesting oath was taken by both the Orthodox and the
792 Moslems of Berat town and district. Its commonest forms were
[779] 'By Him of Tomorr' and 'By the Holy One of Tomorr'. The deity that dwelt in pagan days on the summit of Tomorr, the lofty, beautiful mountain that dominates the town of Berat, is still a living force in the district. He was, indeed, so dreaded that even in conversation he could not be named, but only darkly alluded to. 'By that mountain top' is no less solemn an oath than the more definite pair already given. No man had been known to swear any of them falsely.

[821] By what was perhaps a survival of early nature worship, oath-takers sometimes invoked natural objects as in the oaths, 'By this bright light which is dawning', 'By this evening which is coming', 'By this night we have to-night'. These were all given by Catholics in Perlat. The first two were used for oaths taken in the morning and the third for those taken in the evening. Moslems in Godolesh and Labinot sometimes swore 'By this sun' and 'By this earth'. The latter was a very solemn oath, earth being weighty for two reasons: man was made of it and it lies heavy on a dead man who committed sins such as perjury during his lifetime. Apparently oaths were not taken 'by this fire' or 'by this moon'; perhaps both fire and moon lack the inevitability and stability that fitted dawn and darkness, the sun and the earth, for worship by primitive Albanians.

695 Among oaths by sacred buildings were such as 'By this church'
782 among Catholics and 'By this mosque' among Moslems. They were
778 chiefly employed conversationally, and meant little more than our own expression 'on my honour'. Indeed, a man of Lurë used them indifferently, irrespective of whether he or his hearer were Catholic or Moslem. But when a Moslem of Martanesh swore 'by this holy place' as he stood in Balim Sulltan's mausoleum, his oath was very solemn. So, too, were the oaths in Bulqizë 'by that shrine', the domed tomb of Sheikh Fejza; in Tirana by the grave of Sulejman Pasha, the seventeenth-century founder of the town; in Krujë by the tombs of two Bektashi abbots; in Nangë, Lumë, by the tomb of the Khalveti saint, Sheikh Hasan; and in Surroj, by the grave of Sheikh Hasan's brother, Sheikh Ibrahim. In the last case the formula was rather unusual; standing in the mausoleum (*teqe*) the

10: Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

Another aggravated form of theft was that which took place on the public highway. There was a rule that 'the public highway must not be cut'. If a robber stole a wayfarer's horse, mule, donkey or sheep, shooting inevitably took place; if the thief survived, he had to return the animal, and to pay whatever the Village Assembly decreed. A man very often turned highwayman because he thought his victim was in his debt. If this belief turned out to be mistaken, he had to pay a fine for cutting the highway, besides returning the stolen animal and compensating the owner for the loss of its services. When a sheep had been taken, and was not returned at once, the thief might even be expelled from the village with all his family. 685

Robbery of a Catholic church was sacrilege and a very serious view was taken of it. The thief was shot by the tribe and could not be avenged. His family was expelled and his nearest relatives bought his land, the price going to the church. Stealing from the priest's house or from church lands was still sacrilege, but not so severely punished. In addition to returning two-for-one, the thief had to pay a fine for violating the sanctuary of the house or lands and another to the community for the threat to it. In Mirditë the same penalties were imposed if the theft occurred elsewhere but the booty was hidden in the church. 685 688

Thefts from Orthodox churches and Moslem shrines were also regarded as sacrilege, but not thefts from the houses of Orthodox priests or Moslem clerics, as they were usually at some distance from the places of worship and no sanctity attached to them.

Breaking into any house in order to steal was regarded as a very serious crime, for it brought dishonour as well as material loss to the householder. Opening the farmyard gate or the house door, without giving due warning and being invited to enter, was regarded as housebreaking and punished as such. In Krasniqë, the fine for burgling a house was four times that for burgling a sheepfold. Stealing out on the lonely mountain was regarded as still less heinous, and only one article had to be given in restitution; nor was any fine imposed. 683 685

A man might be dishonoured by other forms of theft than that of housebreaking. In the Malësi e Madhe, a fine of 500 grosh was imposed on the man who helped himself to another's tobacco box or cigarette, and a mere touch on another's pocket might bring a fine. A story is told of a man who was shot at a General

10:Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EG1 Albania EG1

would have found themselves involved in a new feud with the household of the man they had killed, but by the local rule of 'circle after circle' he died as proxy for the real criminal and no new feud entered into the question. There seems to have been no time limit to their extended vengeance.

National solidarity was recognized in the debatable border lands where Slav and Albanian lived side by side. If an Albanian was killed by a Slav, any Albanian would kill any Slav in revenge. The crime, it was felt, had pitted the Albanian family against the Slav family. This national sentiment was so strong that though there has never been any love lost between Gegs (north Albanians) and Tosks (south Albanians), no Geg would allow a Slav to kill a Tosk without seeking in return to kill any Slav he could find. The less warlike Tosks did not feel a similar impulse. If one of their number or a Geg were killed by their Bulgarian or Greek neighbours, they left vengeance to the victim's family.

The community also acted as a single family when certain public servants were killed. If the victim were a Roman Catholic priest, he might lawfully be avenged by his parish, the tribe in which the parish lay, and his own family. If action were taken by the parish or tribe, the matter ended. The avenger's act closed the feud, and, fearing no retribution, he could hang up his rifle. If the priest's family afterwards killed another of the murderer's men, they began a new feud. Generally the family did not wait for the parish or the tribe to act. When a Mohammedan or an Orthodox priest was killed, it fell to his relatives to avenge the crime; the feeling that sacrilege had been committed was too slight to drive their parishioners into action.

If a field-guard of Lumë were killed, he was publicly avenged. If the murderer was from another village, any of the field-guard's fellow villagers could lawfully kill any man from the murderer's village during the first twenty-four hours, and afterwards he could kill the murderer or any other man in his household. In either case he could hang up his rifle. If the field-guard were killed by a fellow-villager, the village expelled the murderer. On the other hand, if a miller were killed, vengeance rested with his family; the village could not act. A field-guard was a public necessity; without his services the village economy would suffer, and he must be given public protection. A miller had taken up his work for the sake of private gain and was not a public necessity; if he were not at the

10:Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

682 *628 ten or twenty years, according to the crime. In Mirditë, presumably under church influence, the murderer of a priest was expelled for ever, and other anti-social criminals for five to fifteen years. In Martanesh the injured man might after an interval intercede with the local elders and secure a remission of part of the sentence; otherwise the murderer and his descendants must remain in exile. Several local traditions maintain that sentences of perpetual banishment were formerly much commoner. In Martanesh no such sentence has been pronounced for 200 years, and in Shpat none for 100 years. In Lurë any murderer used to be banished in perpetuity; witness the numerous families of Lurë origin who now live in Prizren, Tetovo, Reka and other places in Yugoslavia.

428 682 In Lurë when a man was sentenced to perpetual banishment, his nearest kinsmen, those who would have been his heirs in the event of his dying childless, divided up his land. His family was in fact reckoned as extinct so far as the tribe was concerned. In Mirditë also he was considered as dead to the tribe. Father Gjeçov gives two accounts of what happened there to his land. For ordinary expulsions it was left uncultivated and used for public grazing. [688] When a man was expelled for breaking into a church or for killing a priest, his land was bought by his nearest kinsmen and the money given to the church. In Shpat again the murderer's nearest kinsmen divided up his land; but there the elders valued it and the kinsmen paid the murderer the estimated sum before he was drummed out; if they could not raise the money, the village found it, subject to recovering it later from the kinsmen. On the other [423] hand, when a murderer was banished only for a term of years, his land everywhere remained uncultivated until his return, when he built a house and resumed cultivation. During his absence, his ownership of the land was uncontested, but he was not allowed to derive any profit from it. A voluntary exile was in a different position; he could empower a kinsman to work his land and throughout his absence to remit to him in his place of exile an agreed proportion of the profits.

682 *638 584 When a man was expelled for good, the community signalled the same by tearing up the four corner-stones of the foundations of his house after they had burned it down. When his banishment was temporary, the corner-stones were left in place to await his return. Again when his banishment was perpetual, there could be no more giving or taking in marriage for him in the village; any engagements